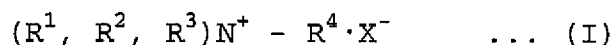
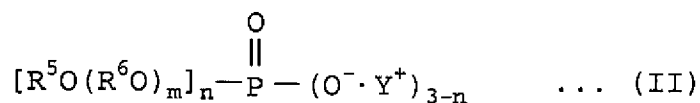


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A water-permeable agent for fiber comprising a quaternary ammonium salt (A) represented by the following formula (I) ~~[[;]]~~ :



wherein ~~R¹ is a C₈ to C₂₄ aliphatic hydrocarbon group;~~ each of R¹ and R² is independently a C₈ to C₁₈ aliphatic hydrocarbon group when ~~R¹ is a C₈ to C₁₈ aliphatic hydrocarbon group, and a hydrogen atom, C₁ to C₂ aliphatic hydrocarbon group, or C₁ to C₂ hydroxyalkyl group when R¹ is a C₁₉ to C₂₄ aliphatic hydrocarbon group;~~ each of R³ and R⁴ is, independently, a hydrogen atom, C₁ to C₃ aliphatic hydrocarbon group, or C₁ to C₃ hydroxyalkyl group; and X is an ionic residue selected from the group consisting of halogen ions, nitrate ion, acetate ion, methyl sulfate ion, ethyl sulfate ion and dimethyl phosphate ion; and a phosphate salt (B) represented by the following formula (II) ~~[[;]]~~ :

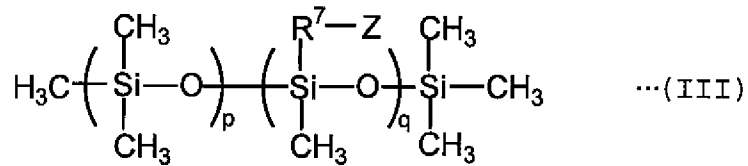


wherein R^5 is a C_6 - C_{20} aliphatic hydrocarbon group; R^6 is an ethylene and/or propylene group; m is an integer from θ 2 to 15; Y is an ionic residue selected from the group consisting of hydrogen ion, sodium ion, potassium ion, ammonium ion, diethanol ammonium ion, and triethanol ammonium ion; and n is an integer from 1 to 2; one of which constitutes 20 to 80 weight percent and the other constitutes 80 to 20 weight percent of the total of said quaternary ammonium salt (A) and said phosphate salt (B).

2. (Currently Amended) A The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 1, wherein ~~each of R^1 and R^2 of the formula (I) is independently a C_6 to C_{18} aliphatic hydrocarbon group, and each of R^3 and R^4 of the formula (I) is independently a C_1 to C_2 aliphatic hydrocarbon group~~ said phosphate salt (B) is contained in an amount of 30 to 60 weight % based on the water-permeable agent.

3. (Currently Amended) A The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein R^5 of the formula (II) is a C_8 to C_{18} aliphatic hydrocarbon group and R^6 of the formula (II) is an ethylene group.

4. (Currently Amended) A The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 1, further comprising 5 to 20 weight percent of polyoxyalkylene-modified silicone represented by the formula (III) [I; I] :



wherein R⁷ is a methylene group, ethylene group, propylene group, N-(aminoethyl) methylimino group, or N-(aminopropyl) propylimino group; Z is a polyoxyalkylene group containing at least 20 weight percent of polyoxyethylene moieties; and p and q are integers which attain a molecular weight of 1,000 to 100,000 and silicon content of 20 to 70 weight percent.

5. (Currently Amended) A The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 1 to be applied to nonwoven fabric.

6. (Currently Amended) A The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 1 to be applied to hydrophobic synthetic fiber or composite fiber thereof.

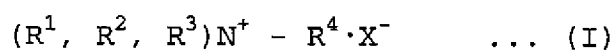
7. (Currently Amended) A The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 6, wherein the hydrophobic synthetic fiber is polyolefin fiber.

8. (Original) Water-permeable fiber comprising fiber and the water-permeable agent according to Claim 1 applied to the fiber by 0.1 to 2.0 weight percent.

9. (Original) Water-permeable fiber comprising fiber and the water-permeable agent according to Claim 4 applied to the fiber by 0.1 to 2.0 weight percent.

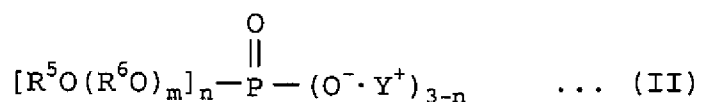
10. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to claim 2, wherein said quaternary ammonium salt (A) is contained in an amount of 40 to 70 weight % based on the water-permeable agent.

11. (New) A water-permeable agent for fiber comprising a quaternary ammonium salt (A) represented by the following formula (I):



wherein R^1 is a C_{19} to C_{24} aliphatic hydrocarbon group; ~~R^2 is a hydrogen atom, C_1 to C_3 aliphatic hydrocarbon group, or C_1 to C_3 hydroxyalkyl group;~~ each of R^2 , R^3 and R^4 is, independently, a hydrogen atom, C_1 to C_3 aliphatic hydrocarbon group, or C_1 to C_3 hydroxyalkyl group; and X is an ionic residue selected from the group consisting of halogen ions, nitrate ion, acetate ion, methyl sulfate ion, ethyl sulfate ion and dimethyl phosphate ion; and

a phosphate salt (B) represented by the following formula (II):

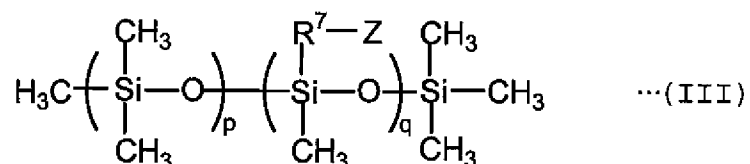


wherein R^5 is a C_6 - C_{20} aliphatic hydrocarbon group; R^6 is an ethylene and/or propylene group; m is an integer from 0 to 15; Y is an ionic residue selected from the group consisting of hydrogen ion, sodium ion, potassium ion, ammonium ion, diethanol ammonium ion, and triethanol ammonium ion; and n is an integer from 1 to 2; one of which constitutes 20 to 80 weight percent and the other constitutes 80 to 20 weight percent of the total of said quaternary ammonium salt (A) and said phosphate salt (B).

12. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 11, wherein m of the formula (II) is an integer from 2 to 15.

13. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 11, wherein R⁵ of the formula (II) is a C₈ to C₁₈ aliphatic hydrocarbon group and R⁶ of the formula (II) is an ethylene group.

14. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 11, further comprising 5 to 20 weight percent of polyoxyalkylene-modified silicone represented by the formula (III):



wherein R⁷ is a methylene group, ethylene group, propylene group, N-(aminoethyl) methylimino group, or N-(aminopropyl) propylimino group; Z is a polyoxyalkylene group containing at least 20 weight percent of polyoxyethylene moieties; and p and q are integers which attain a molecular weight of 1,000 to 100,000 and silicon content of 20 to 70 weight percent.

15. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 11 to be applied to nonwoven fabric.

16. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 11 to be applied to hydrophobic synthetic fiber or composite fiber thereof.

17. (New) The water-permeable agent for fiber according to Claim 16, wherein the hydrophobic synthetic fiber is polyolefin fiber.

18. (New) Water-permeable fiber comprising fiber and the water-permeable agent according to Claim 11 applied to the fiber by 0.1 to 2.0 weight percent.

19. (New) Water-permeable fiber comprising fiber and the water-permeable agent according to Claim 14 applied to the fiber by 0.1 to 2.0 weight percent.